

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 20, 2020

Chairwoman Nita Lowey
Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Kay Granger
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agricultural, Rural Development, FDA, &
Related Agencies
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Jeff Fortenberry
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agricultural, Rural Development, FDA, &
Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Granger and Ranking Member Fortenberry:

I write to request that you work to move to designate the site of the 1908 Springfield Race Riots a National Historic Monument to preserve and recognize it as an important part of our nation's history.

The site and artifacts were unearthed during construction of the Carpenter Street segment of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project and consists of the remains of five homes that were burned during the 1908 Springfield Race Riot, one of the three worst race riots in our nation's history. These events demonstrated that racial injustice was not an isolated issue only in the South, but one to be addressed across the country. Ultimately the riots that occurred at the site in Springfield played an integral role in the formation of the NAACP.

Earlier this Congress I introduced H.R. 139, the Springfield Race Riot National Historic Monument Act, which would designate the site of the 1908 Springfield Race Riots as a National Historic Monument to commemorate this important piece of history, as a public reminder of the progress we have made, and the progress we can continue to make in the future.

Last year the Department of Interior released their reconnaissance survey which found that the site is likely suitable for designation as a National Historic Monument. Most recently, the bill moved through House Natural Resources Committee and was reported out by unanimous consent to conduct a special resources study.

Designating the Springfield Race Riot Site as part of the National Park System would provide not only an important historical and educational benefit. Therefore I request that in your upcoming Fiscal Year 2021 bill, you work to move this specific designation forward and authorize funding for any relevant studies needed, and that you move to establish the monument. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rodney Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rodney" and last name "Davis" clearly distinguishable.

RODNEY DAVIS
Member of Congress